

ACCOUNT OF AN ADDRESS GIVEN
BEFORE THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH
WOODFORD BRANCH OF THE P.N.E.U.

Speaker, MISS FANNY JOHNSTON.

Subject: "The Opportunities which London affords for
Educational Purposes."

We may look upon London as a body made up of many parts, a vast whole composed of many constituents—many grades of people attracted to one spot but forming separate societies. How is it that this vast conclave has come together in this way,—how is it one town has become such a centre to which persons of all ranks and professions flock.

We must consider the separate units of this whole, and see how intimately they are connected with each other, and what gave rise in the first place to this vast amalgamation of persons and trades. If we look on a map the first thing we notice about London is that it is built on a river. Many towns are built on rivers—this is convenient for commerce. The position of London on a river and within easy access of the sea, besides promoting commerce, increases navigation: and, in early times, would necessitate the elevation of a fortress or something of that kind to protect it from enemies. This would need to be built between the town and the sea, but far enough inland to protect the town.

All kinds of trades would then spring up through the introduction of things from other countries and the exportation of goods from our own land. This influx and reflux would employ a number of persons, and gradually there would be formed in the city a working part, or a quarter for

the employees, workmen, mechanics, and another for the clerks, governors, directors, and so on. In this way Southwark, Bermondsey, Westminster, Fulham, Battersea, Lambeth, Camberwell, Shoreditch, and the City sprang into existence. Then gradually, as commerce increased, the people spread out, and small villages were submerged into the one big metropolis, and Hampstead, Islington, Hackney, West Ham, all became parts of London.

Now the name of London generally calls up in the minds of each one of us some particular part of that great centre. To some it means the City, to others Westminster, to others again it may mean the West End. To some it is a place of amusement—a pleasure ground, to others merely a convenience, whilst to many it is a place of work, of toil, and even struggle. Some are continually harassed by the painful sights which may be witnessed daily and even hourly in its most densely-thronged quarters.

For educational purposes London may be studied from several points of view. English history and literature, geography—both political and physical, architecture, grammar, art, antiquity, natural history, arithmetic, geometry, and many other branches of instruction may be amply illustrated within its precincts. Many of its streets and parks are named after persons of historic note or literary interest—Drury Lane recalls us Nell Gwyne of Old Drury and the times of Charles II., Queen Victoria Street and the Victoria Embankment our noble Queen, whilst Norman Street takes us back to the Norman Conquest. The Monument, St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London with the Mint, all furnish us with ample historic and literary reminiscences. How much more interesting Cowper's "John Gilpin" would appear to the minds of our children if they knew that a man of that name once lived in Cheapside, and that a monument to his memory is to be found in a small Church in London.